

To: SA PEN Members

E-Newsletter No. 7/2013 – 30/04/2013



**THE SOUTH AFRICAN CENTRE OF
PEN INTERNATIONAL**

A World Association of Writers

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Protection of State Information Bill passed by Parliament; call for Constitutional Court review

By Raymond Louw, 30/04/2013

After five years of debate, South Africa's Protection of State Information Bill, or secrecy bill as it was dubbed, the legislation passed through the final stage of the Parliamentary process on April 26 with 190 members voting in favour, 75 voting against and one member abstaining. A total of 134 members, of which 34 were members of the ruling

party, the African National Congress, were absent.

The next step is for President Jacob Zuma to sign the bill into law or if he has doubts about its constitutionality, to return it to the National Assembly for review. Alternatively, he can refer it directly to the Constitutional Court to establish its constitutionality. If he

signs it into law the opposition parties have the option of referring it to the court if they can muster 134 votes, a third of the house's 400 members. That will be a hard task because opposition members in the house total 136 and not all of them may vote for such a move and the chances of ANC members siding with the vote are slim.

Several civil society organisations such as the South African National Editors' Forum, the Freedom of Expression Institute and the Right2Know campaign who have strongly opposed the bill have declared their intention to refer it to the Constitutional Court if the parliamentary processes do not succeed. The process open to them is to apply to the court directly.

Their determination suggests that ultimately the bill will land up before the court and several lawyers – in contrast to the government's legal advisors – believe it will fail the constitutional test.

The lengthy processes to which the bill has been subject -- some 800 changes to the text were made -- has resulted in many improvements, but the bill remains under attack because the amendments have not gone far enough and there are still some very objectionable features.

The major criticism remains a failure to include a public interest defence for contravening a provision of the Bill prohibiting the publication of classified information that should be in the public domain in the public interest. Lack of this protection could be harmful to whistle-blowers, journalists and members of the public.

Other broad criticisms of the bill are that the definitions and classification procedures and applications are too

broad and not strictly limited to national security which the bill states is the purpose; the scope for classification to be applied includes cabinet ministers and heads of government departments and other organs of state which make application showing good cause for such power to be extended to them; the wording of some sections of the bill is confusing and contradictory and open to misinterpretation; and the excessive powers given to the Minister of State Security whose role extends beyond the scope of policy making and could result in political interference in the classification of information.

Another complaint is the manner in which the drafters of the bill have ignored the principles for classification of official secrets outlined in the Johannesburg Principles drawn up by a group of senior lawyers and experts in international and constitutional law, national security and human rights who in 1995 gathered in a country lodge north of Johannesburg to compose them into a document which has been endorsed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The conference was organised by Article 19 in collaboration with the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

One of the broad descriptions of subject areas that give rise to concerns about the manner in which a very wide range of information can be classified is contained in the definition of national security. This includes the protection of the people and territorial integrity of the Republic against the exposure of economic, scientific or technological secrets vital to the Republic.

The manner in which authority to classify information is extended far beyond the confines of the security establishment, despite a clause which states that secrecy is justifiable only when it is necessary to protect the national security, emerges in another clause which states that the powers of classification, reclassification and declassification apply to the cabinet, security, defence and police services and to any organ of state or part thereof that makes application to the Minister of State Security. A head of an organ of state may delegate, in writing, the authority to classify state information to a staff member at a sufficiently senior level without spelling the level of seniority. Potential ministerial involvement in classification is illustrated by a clause which says that if there is significant doubt as to whether state information requires protection, the matter must be referred to the relevant minister for a decision.

While having made the point that protection of national security is the only justifiable reason for secrecy, another clause dealing with the principles that underpin the legislation “and inform its interpretation and implementation” states that the protection and classification of certain state information is however vital to save lives, to enhance and to protect the freedom and security of persons, bring criminals to justice, protect the national security and to engage in effective government and diplomacy. When information is categorised as classified, all individual items of information that fall within that classified category are deemed to be classified.

A classification review panel will assess and hear appeals against classifications but the criticisms are that the minister has a say in the

composition of the panel and also in how it conducts its affairs. Another area where the minister may exercise substantial powers to interfere with the classification processes and introduce undesirable political considerations is in the promulgation of regulations.

The penalties that can be incurred are severe and range from three to 25 years imprisonment. The most severe penalty is imprisonment of between 15 and 25 years for a person who unlawfully and intentionally communicates, delivers or makes available state information classified top secret which the person knows or ought reasonably to have known would directly or indirectly benefit a foreign state; or who unlawfully and intentionally makes, obtains, collects, captures or copies a record containing state information classified top secret which the person knows or ought reasonably to have known would directly or indirectly benefit a foreign state. Lesser prison sentences apply to similar offences involving information classified secret or confidential. Conviction on the basis that a person ought reasonably to have known would directly or indirectly benefit a foreign state is questionable.

Also questionable are the restrictive measures imposed on judicial offices to conduct court hearings in camera because classified information may be produced during the hearing.

A clause which will have a chilling effect on journalists states that a person in possession of a classified record knowing that it has been unlawfully communicated, delivered or made available must hand over the document to the police, the intelligence service or the state department that classified the information. Failure to do so carries a jail sentence of five years. It is

uncertain whether having handed over the document the person would be charged with possession. If a reporter is involved – and they are frequently recipients of such communications --

he or she may also be confronted with the ethical question of whether to disclose the identity of the person who gave the document.

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Boston Bombings, 21st April 2013

By AE Ballakisten

Dear friends at SA PEN

It has been a sad and surreal week here in Boston which started with the marathon bombings on Monday and ended with the arrest of the second suspect on Friday; in between, as you know, there was devastating injuries and the deaths of three spectators, a policeman and the first bombing suspect. The shootings between police and the suspects started just a few blocks from where I live. All week I heard ambulance and police sirens screaming outside; with so many sirens screaming at once, the noise was deeply disturbing, as though a despairing cry of our collective humanity, as if the collective human spirit was wailing in those screaming sirens. This despair is not limited to what happened here in Boston, for such terror is a daily occurrence in many places around the world and indeed also in South Africa.

We Rise poured from my pen on Monday night in response to the cries of ‘all our mothers.’ The message that I’ve been sharing here is that our best response to crisis is love, love for those who suffered and love in our pursuit of justice. To repair our tainted humanity we must leave space for forgiveness. Hateful revenge will bring us all down, as evidenced by the growing global violence. ‘With love, we all will rise.’

I came to Harvard to investigate possible alternative political, social and economic systems that could lead mankind away from a path of destruction and towards not just peace, but human flourishing. My greatest lesson while being here has been that there is no perfect system, there is no blueprint for human flourishing, instead there is a journey that we must travel *towards* each other, along which we strip away the false barriers we place between ourselves and live in ways that enhances our common humanity.

As Boston begins its healing, I am reminded of how far we in South Africa have come in our healing process but also reminded of how far we still need to travel toward each other. May you all know the gentle healing power of love.

WE RISE

Ambulance sirens scream
louder, more chaotic shrieks
than normal ... (normal?)
like they too have shock and anger
swirling in their shattered hearts.
They fade into weak wailing
cries of mourning mothers,
mothers of the fallen,
all our mothers.

And then empty silence ...
that we fill with silent embraces
just to feel closeness,
as if to remind our spirits
that humanity still exists
albeit tainted tonight.

In the cold darkness, love,
love smiles its warmth,
its hopeful light, love,
our gentlest healer,
our greatest need,
our best response.

The fallen will rise,
with love,
we all will rise.

*AE Ballakisten
Boston, 15 April 2013*

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Creativity and Constraint in Today's China

23/04/2013

Dear PEN Centre Presidents,

This year at the PEN World Voices Festival, on World Press Freedom Day, we will be officially launching a major PEN International report on the climate for writers and freedom of expression in China. The report, *Creativity and Constraint in Today's China*, will be presented at a press event hosted by Festival Chair Salman Rushdie and PEN International President, John Ralston Saul, on the morning of **May 3, 2013**.

We would like to ask you two things.

First, would you be willing to sign an open letter to the Chinese government, which will be released at the Report launch event? I'm attaching a copy of the open letter here; **we are gathering signatures from leading writers and cultural figures from around the world** (Nadine Gordimer, JM Coetzee, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Tomas Tranströmer are among those who have already signed), and we would love to add your name to the list.

Second, in addition to adding your name to the letter, we would be enormously grateful if you could reach out to one or two other widely-recognized writers or artists from other disciplines in your country who may be willing to sign as well. As you will see, we would like the letter to represent the global creative community, and we would love to make sure there is representation from as many countries and traditions as possible.

I am attaching the Executive Summary of the report, which outlines PEN's conclusions and recommendations for your information.

(open letter and summary available on request – please email rudebs@icon.co.za)

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Sahar Halaimzai
Sahar Halaimzai | Communications & Campaigns Manager | PEN International

26/04/13 update - Our list of signatories is growing and now includes people such as John Ashbery, Tracey Emin, A C Grayling, Ian McEwan, Mario Vargas Llosa, Wole Soyinka, Tomas Tranströmer, Juan Gelman and many others.

SA PEN members are invited to sign the open letter to the Chinese government. Please Sahar directly at Sahar.Halaimzai@pen-international.org

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February and March letter from John Ralston Saul, International President, to the PEN membership

08 April, 2013

Dear PEN members, Dear friends,
This letter covers two months – February and March. I have been constantly on the road, which is never good for writing.

The main news I have comes out of a trip back to Mexico and on to Nicaragua. But first some good news.

If you go to our website, you will find a report by Larry Siems on the move by a handful of OAS member states to gut the independence of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the IACHR's Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression (<http://bit.ly/12ALHBZ>). Weakening them would have been a disaster for freedom of expression in the Americas. The attempt was turned back on the 22nd of March at the OAS General Assembly in Washington. However, like the move to formalize religious defamation at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, it was not clearly rejected. Instead it was pushed to the side and could well be brought back by its advocates for another round.

In any case, as in Geneva, PEN engaged itself in the defence of the IACHR and its Special Rapporteur. It is good to see that such institutions have won the day.

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I should also mention that Hori Takeaki and I were in London in February to talk strategy with Laura McVeigh and to spend time with our

new staff. Over the same period, Hori-san was part of the hiring committee interviewing for Sara Whyatt's replacement. Laura and Marian Botsford Fraser will be writing to you about the outcome very soon.

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Now back to Mexico. Eight of us returned to Mexico City in a follow-up Delegation, a little over a year after our full Delegation went there. This time we had Aline Davidoff, the new President of PEN Mexico and Alicia Quinones; Victor Sahuatoba, Vice-President of PEN San Miguel; Ola Larsmo, President of Swedish PEN and Elnaz Baghlanian; Larry Siems, Director of International Programs of PEN American Centre; Alain Pescador and myself.

I went to Mexico a few days early to give the opening speech at the Inter American Press Association (IAPA) meeting in Puebla. This was an opportunity to put forward PEN's position on the situation in Mexico, on impunity in the Americas, and on the then OAS risk. I had three days to talk about these issues with press leaders from throughout the Americas.

In addition, I was able to meet with the Cuban blogger, Yoani Sanchez.

The Delegation then worked in Mexico City from March 11th to the 13th. Our key meetings with officials were with the Attorney General, Jesus Karam Murillo, a central figure in the new government of President Peña Nieto, the Deputy Attorney General, Ricardo García Cervantes, the Special Prosecutor for Crimes Against

Freedom of Expression, Laura Borbolla, and with the Deputy Minister of Interior in Charge of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, Lia Limon, who was in charge of putting in place the protection mechanism for journalists under threat.

The position of the government is disconcerting in that it is extremely eager to claim that the situation is worse than we say it is. Their emphasis was entirely on long-term reforms. They had little to say about what could be done in the short-term.

The position we developed in these meetings and in public, beyond our official two-pager (<http://bit.ly/13PRO93>), was focused on two key points:

- That the long-term reforms were all very well, and we were certainly supportive of them. However they did not deal with the ongoing violence, and could be rendered irrelevant if that violence were allowed to continue. We insisted that there needed to be immediate emergency programs based on pulling together enough police and lawyers to get investigations, charges, trials and convictions underway. They have to demonstrate that the justice system can work.

- That although the new President of the Republic has made some comments on freedom of expression, there is no clear sense that he is leading on this issue. The President needs to take a strong and sustained public stand on the question of freedom of expression and impunity, in order to give direction to his officials.

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The launch of Swedish PEN's new issue of The Dissident Blog devoted to

Mexico at the residence of the Swedish Ambassador drew a large crowd, both of Mexican journalists and NGO figures. The Dissident Blog is playing an important role in PEN getting out its free expression message.

Through this Follow-up Delegation we were able to reassert PEN International's concerns and to demonstrate that we will be in Mexico on a regular basis to support our three PEN Centres and writers in general. The Delegation's work was reinforced by The Dissident Blog launch and PEN International's UPR report on Mexico (<http://bit.ly/Zt9664>) prepared by Tamsin Mitchell and presented in Geneva at the same time.

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I then went on to Managua with Alain Pescador, who as many of you know works with me. There, we spent three days in intense meetings with leading writers/journalists, NGO's and government officials. Our program was set up by the Nicaraguan novelist, Sergio Ramirez, one of the founders of Nicaraguan PEN, and Cristiana Chamorro, chair of the Violeta Chamorro Foundation, which works on human rights issues in Nicaragua. We got to know the members of Nicaraguan PEN, and worked with them and other leading Nicaraguan writers on the enlarging of Nicaraguan PEN to include a broad coalition of the country's writers.

Nicaraguan PEN is eager to move down this road. It was good to talk with the Centre's President, Juan-Carlos Vilchez, their Board, members of other writers organizations, and leading journalists about their part in the re-energizing of PEN Centres in Latin America.

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The situation in Nicaragua seems to be more or less the following. There are few, if any, indications of violence or imprisonment related to writers. However, the Ortega government seems to have taken the sophisticated road of limiting freedom of expression through such mechanisms as press ownership; the politicized spending of government money; and virtually no access to information - they are pretty much starving freedom of expression. Nine of ten television broadcasters are now either in government hands, or in the hands of the government's friends.

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Finally, as many of you know, two of our most important leaders from the International office have now moved on: Sara Whyatt and Frank Geary. Sara has played an amazing leadership role in the WiPC over two decades.

Her knowledge and her devotion, her ability and her willingness to work endlessly until we have found some way to help writers in trouble, are all well-known. Of course, she is still devoted to PEN and we will be seeing her again, but this is an important moment and I want to say thank you to Sara on behalf of all of us.

Frank has played a key role in the creation of a whole new style of PEN programs. His role in the education programs, mainly in Africa, is well-known to all of our Centres there. His Centres' support work has been invaluable. He is off to run an NGO in Ireland. Again, I know we will be doing many things with him in the future. And again, many thanks Frank, from all of us.

Best wishes to you all,

John Ralston Saul

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Forthcoming events

- ❖ **World Press Freedom Day** – 3rd May 2013
- ❖ **Dancing in Other Words / Die Dansende Digtersfees** – 10th & 11th May 2013, Spier, Stellenbosch. This is an international poetry festival, curated by Breyten Breytenbach. www.dancinginotherwords.co.za
- ❖ **45th Annual Conference of The Writers for Peace Committee of PEN International** - Bled, Slovenia, 8th to 12th May 2013
- ❖ **PEN International Writers in Prison Committee Conference** - Krakow, Poland, 14th to 17th May 2013
- ❖ **Franschhoek Literary Festival** – 17th to 19th May 2013. www.flf.co.za
- ❖ **Fugard Festival & JM Coetzee & Nobel Laureates Festival** – 23rd to 26th May, Richmond, Karoo. www.richmondnc.co.za
- ❖ **The National Arts Festival** - 28th June to 8th July 2012, Grahamstown. www.nationalartsfestival.co.za

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A warm **welcome to new member/s**: Glenda Daniels



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The University Of Iowa’s International Writing Program presents the Virtual (Online) Poetry Workshop

Dear South African PEN Centre,

My name is Ashley Davidson and I work for the International Writing Program (IWP) at the University of Iowa (United States). I wanted to share some information about two free 7-week online poetry seminars we’ll be offering this summer through our Distance Learning program that I thought might be of interest to members of the South African PEN Centre.

The IWP is located in Iowa City, a UNESCO world city of literature, also home to the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, the top creative writing program in the United States, but the courses are taught online: all students need is an internet connection. This summer (May 20-July 1) we are offering two free virtual poetry seminars: an Advanced Poetry Seminar (for strong, emerging poets) and a Poetry Masterclass (for poets with a strong publication track record). The courses, which are capped at 15 students each, meet once a week, and are a great opportunity for students to discuss poetry and get feedback on their work from writers from around the globe. For our last seminar, we selected 15 poets from 8 countries out of a pool of 150 applicants.

Applications, including a cover letter, resume, and a writing sample (5 pages of poems max) are due by **May 8th**. Full details are available at: <http://iwp.uiowa.edu/calendar/2013-05-08/applications-due-for-virtual-poetry-seminars-advanced-poetry-seminar-poetry-mast>

Anything you might be able to do to help us get the word out to interested poets in Constantia and beyond would be most appreciated!

Thank you for your time.

With best wishes,
Ashley Davidson
Program Coordinator for Outreach and Special Programs
International Writing Program, <http://iwp.uiowa.edu/>

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Message to the Members of PEN, from Laura McVeigh, Director PEN International

26/04/2013

Dear friends,

It has been a very busy couple of months here in the International Secretariat as I know it has been for many of you. Here is some of our latest news:

Congress

I hope by now you have received details of this year’s Congress to be held in Reykjavik, Iceland between 9th – 12th September. Our hosts Icelandic PEN have put together a dedicated Congress website at:

<http://www.penreykjavik2013.is> where you can register online. This year's Congress has a strong Free the Word! festival planned in partnership with the Reykjavik Festival of Literature and we are organising a vibrant programme of workshops, readings and open events which we very much hope as many delegates as possible will take part in – we would like you to share your writing with the people of Iceland. For queries about the Congress please contact Paul Finegan (paul.finegan@pen-international.org).

Writers in Prison Committee Conference

I look forward to seeing those of you attending the Writers in Prison Committee Conference in May in Krakow, Poland. This conference will also provide a key space to develop PEN's work on Digital Freedom – taking forward the next steps of the Declaration on Digital Freedom, a theme which will continue through to the Congress in September. Now, more than ever, the work of the Writers in Prison Committee is an essential part of PEN's work worldwide. We will be welcoming Ann Harrison, incoming Writers in Prison Committee Programme Director, to Krakow and I know she is greatly looking forward to meeting many of you and learning more about PEN's work in this area.

Writers for Peace Committee Conference

I will also have the opportunity to meet with many of you at the Writers for Peace Committee Conference in Bled in May. This year we will be holding the meeting of the International Board at Bled in advance of the conference and we thank Slovenian PEN for their kind assistance in helping us organise the Board meeting as part of the overall Bled programme.

Free the Word!

We continue to develop our partnership with Hay Festivals and other literary festival partners this year as we take Free the Word! events and festival activity most recently to Columbia, Lebanon, Wales and later in the year to Scotland and Iceland among other destinations. I would like to thank all those PEN centres who partner with us to deliver vibrant programming reaching out to new audiences for PEN's work. This is an aspect of PEN's work we continue to build and grow – for further information about Free the Word! and ways to get involved please contact our literary manager James Tennant (james.tennant@pen-international.org).

New projects in partnership

The first round of partnership working within our SIDA funding is now underway and I am delighted that so many centres put forward excellent project proposals. To find out more about the Beacon Centres programme and the Civil Society programme and all the PEN centres involved see www.pen-international.org. We are working in the first round of civil society programmes with Cambodia, Central Asia, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Nepal, Puerto Rico, Uyghur PEN. The first group of Beacon Centres – centres with which PEN International will work closely on centre development and capacity building – are Central Asia PEN, Sierra Leone PEN, Zambia PEN, Philippines PEN, Haiti PEN and Afghanistan PEN.

We will be launching the second call for proposals later in the summer and I hope many of you will participate in this ongoing and developing opportunity.

PEN Awards

Many centres run a fantastic programme of PEN Awards and we are building up the full international picture of PEN awards at present. Please send details of your current Awards programmes to our Communications Manager Sahar Halaimzai (Sahar.halaimzai@pen-international.org) so that we can feature them online. This year also sees the launch of the **PEN International/New Voices Award** – the submissions window is currently open until 20th June. Please encourage young writers (aged 18 – 30) in your country to get involved. Full details of the prize and award programme are available at www.pen-international.org

China Report

On World Press Freedom Day, 3rd May, we will be launching *The PEN Report: Creativity and Constraint in Today's China* as part of the World Voices Festival in New York. Thank you to all members who have participated in the creation of the report

and to those supporting the Open Letter which will accompany the launch. For further details contact Sahar Halaimzai (Sahar.halaimzai@pen-international.org).

PEN Publications

We are delighted that the second publication in the PEN International Publishers Circle Series – *Write Against Impunity* – is now available both online and in print. Many centres publish excellent collections of writing by PEN members and we would like to feature these in a new online bookshop as part of the website redevelopment underway. Please send details of your Centre's publications to Sahar Halaimzai (Sahar.halaimzai@pen-international.org) for inclusion.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming PEN International events.

Warm regards,
Laura McVeigh
Director, PEN International

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Open Book Cape Town - Boeke Bazaar!

The first fund raiser event of the year is set to take place on the **17th May 2013** at the Book Lounge, and it looks like it will be a night to remember!

All of us have memories of old school bazaars - well it's time to revisit them...There will be a pudding table and a white elephant table and - it goes without saying - a tombola. Toast Coetzer and Stephen Timm of Buckfever Underground fame, will be performing on the evening, and are not to be missed.

We're not charging a cover, but items will be on sale, so please do bring a little cash. All proceeds will go towards buying books for the library at Westridge High School.

Time: 17.00 onwards

Place: Book Lounge, 71 Roeland Street, Cape Town, 021 462 2425

If you would like further details about the Library Project or Open Book 2013 (7th – 11th September 2013), please contact Frankie (frankie@openbookfestival.co.za).

Regards, The Open Book Team

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WORKING WITH YOUR LIFE STORIES

A workshop on writing memoir facilitated by Dawn Garisch

Writing is a way of getting to know who you are, what you are feeling and how you relate to people and the planet. Writing memoir focuses this project on the themes or motifs in one's own life. We each have a life motif that is more or less unconscious. Yet a distinctive and evolving pattern binds our journey from birth to death into a whole coherent piece.

Imagination is an extraordinary tool. In this workshop we will reclaim imagination as a means to release ourselves into awe and creativity, connectedness and purpose, awareness and pleasure. Through becoming conscious of and engaging with the images that shape our time on earth, we will discover ways to live more creatively, as well as finding refreshing approaches to put our personal stories down on the page.

Beginner writers are welcome.

COURSE DETAILS:

Venue: Zwaanswyk, Cape Town
Dates: 27th – 31st May 2013
Times: 9am – 1pm every day
Fee: R1 500,00
Email: dawn.garisch@gmail.com

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AfriBooks

24/04/2013 - Yesterday was World Book Day in South Africa, a day where the culture of reading is encouraged. On that note I would like to share some exciting news with you that involves two books that I have worked on.

Digital publishers Berg + Bach have developed a new application, AfriBooks: an ever-expanding selection of entertaining and irreverent South African eBooks on Google Play and iTunes.

The library app was launched yesterday on World Book Day. New South African titles will be added to the AfriBooks container each month, varying from recent bestsellers to niche titles to novels that have gone out-of-print. Bestsellers *50 People Who Stuffed Up South Africa* and *50 Flippen Brilliant People*, both books illustrated by myself, are one of the books already available in AfriBooks.

For the venture, Berg + Bach have collaborated with independent South African publishers Burnet Media. Together, the companies aim to make irreverent and entertaining South African books accessible to anyone with a tablet or e-reader.

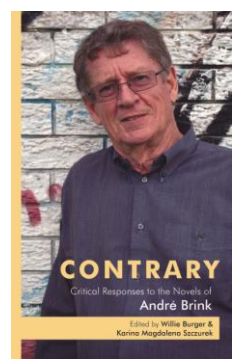
The AfriBooks library container app is free to download. Apple users can download the app on iTunes; Android users can download it on Google Play. Launch prices for eBooks within AfriBooks vary from R45 to R80 (approx. US\$4.85 to US\$8.65).

Go check it out and hope you will enjoy it! **ZAP!RO**

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Members' Publications

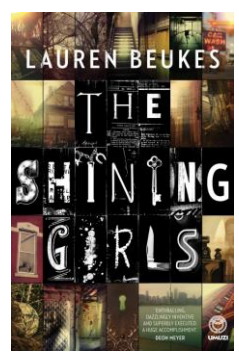
Contrary: Critical Responses to the Novels of André Brink
By Willie Burger and Karina Magdalena Szczurek (eds.)



André Brink is one of South Africa's most prolific, influential, and internationally distinguished writers. This compilation includes twenty essays written in English and Afrikaans by some of the leading critics of his oeuvre. It strives to be indicative of the kind of research undertaken on Brink's work and to give insight into a variety of its aspects, focusing primarily on his novels and their reception. Published since the late 1980s, the criticism collected in this volume looks at Brink's approach to the genre and its narrative techniques. It also contextualises Brink's writing in relation to existentialism, (post)colonialism, myth-making, magic realism, representations of gender and sexuality, the dialectic of history and fiction, the picaresque tradition, and the tensions between memory, narration and identity.

Contributors include: Johan Anker, Lianne Barnard, Mathilda Bothma, Monica Bungaro, Willie Burger, Neil Cochrane, Ampie Coetzee, Isidore Diala, Heilna du Plooy, A.J. Hassall, Peter Horn, Ute Kauer, Godfrey Meintjes, Richard Peck, Jochen Petzold, Henriette Roos, Christell Stander, H.P. van Coller, Louise Viljoen, Marita Wenzel and Nicholas Wroe.

The Shining Girls
By Lauren Beukes



The girl who wouldn't die, hunting a killer who shouldn't exist... A terrifying and original serial-killer thriller from award-winning author, Lauren Beukes.

"It's not my fault. It's yours. You shouldn't shine. You shouldn't make me do this."

Chicago 1931. Harper Curtis, a violent drifter, stumbles on a house with a secret as shocking as his own twisted nature – it opens onto other times. He uses it to stalk his carefully chosen 'shining girls' through the decades – and cut the spark out of them.

He's the perfect killer. Unstoppable. Untraceable. He thinks...

Chicago, 1992. They say what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Tell that to Kirby Mazrachi, whose life was shattered after a brutal attempt to murder her. Still struggling to find her attacker, her only ally is Dan, an ex-homicide reporter who covered her case and now might be falling in love with her.

As Kirby investigates, she finds the other girls – the ones who didn't make it. The evidence is ... impossible. But for a girl who should be dead, impossible doesn't mean it didn't happen...

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Had a book published recently? Attended or participated in a Festival? Won an award? Achieved a personal milestone of note? The compiler would welcome any news of your activities for future issues of the SA PEN e-newsletter. Please e-mail your contributions to rudebs@icon.co.za.

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All information regarding awards/competitions, residencies, festivals, etc., included in this newsletter is passed on to you as a service to SA PEN members. Any questions regarding entry rules, entry processes, festival programmes, etc., should be forwarded direct to the relevant organisers. SA PEN attempts to establish that the information received is genuine before passing this on to our members, but we cannot be held responsible should that not be the case.

